

REMARKS

The Applicant sincerely appreciates the thorough examination of the present application as evidenced by the Final Office Action of November 5, 2008 (the Final Action). In response, the Applicant has amended independent Claims 1 and 11 to include all recitations of Claims 2 and 16, respectively, and to provide further clarification thereof; canceled Claims 2 and 16 without prejudice or disclaimer; amended Claims 3-7 to depend from Claim 1; amended Claims 17-20 to depend from Claim 11; and amended dependent Claims 8, 15, 19, and 20 to provide consistency with the independent Claims.

In the following remarks, the Applicant will show that all claims are patentable over the cited art. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course.

Claims 1 And 11 Are Patentable Over The Cited Art

Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to include all recitations of Claims 2 and 16, respectively, and to provide further clarification thereof. Claims 1 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pub.No. 2003/0037261 to Meffert et al. (Meffert), and Claims 2 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meffert in view of U.S. Pub.No. 2003/0145057 to Throop (Throop). The Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claims 1 and 11 are patentable over Meffert and Throop for at least the reasons discussed below.

Claim 1, for example, recites a system for providing email communications, comprising:

- a memory;
- a processor coupled to the memory and configured to execute an e-mail client application, which includes:
 - message composition logic operable to present a write e-mail window including a message editor pane and to compose a message to at least one recipient responsive to accepting entry of text of a body of the message in a text format into the message editor pane;
 - write protect logic operable to protect the message against subsequent alteration by the at least one recipient, upon receiving a user indication to:
 - enable the write protect logic through conversion of a format of the text in the body of the message from the text format to a picture

format protected against subsequent alterations, and
send the message to the at least one recipient after conversion
of the format of the text from the text format to the picture format
protected against subsequent alterations. (Underline added.)

The Applicant submits that the combination of Meffert and Throop fails to teach or suggest sending a message after conversion of a format of text from a text format to a picture format protected against subsequent alterations. The Final Action concedes that Meffert fails to teach converting the text into a picture format. *See*, Final Action, page 4. In support of the rejection of Claim 2, the Final Action states that:

Throop teaches converting the body of the message from text to an image (step 110) [0032]. It would have been obvious ... to use the graphical conversion of Throop with the security of Meffert because it allows viewing without specific fonts.

Final Action, page 4. Cited portions of Throop, however, relate to connected flow charts 50, 100, and 150 of Figures 2, 2A, and 2B, and these flow charts begin "by receiving an email at the email server, e.g., email server 12, FIG. 1." Throop, page 3, paragraph [0028]. In step 110 of Throop (cited by the Final Action), "email content ... is converted to a graphic image such as a TIFF file" (Throop, page 3, paragraph [0032]) after receiving the email at the email server (*see*, Throop, page 3, paragraph [0028]). Accordingly, Throop teaches away from sending a message after conversion from a text format to a picture format protected against subsequent operations.

The Applicant thus submits that Claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Meffert and Throop. The Applicant further submits that Claim 11 is patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1. Moreover, dependent Claims 3-10, 12-15, and 17-20 are patentable at least as per the patentability of Claims 1 and 11 from which they depend.

Dependent Claims 3 And 19 Are Separately Patentable

Dependent Claims 3 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meffert in view of Throop. Dependent Claims 3 and 19 are patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent Claims 1 and 11, and for the

additional reasons discussed below. Dependent Claim 3, for example, depends from Claim 1, and thus includes all recitations discussed above with respect to Claim 1. In addition, Claim 3 recites that the text in the body of the message converted to the picture format is included as an inline image within the transmitted message.

In support of the rejection of Claims 3 and 9, the Final Action states that "the examiner takes official notice that it is well known in the art to attach images or files, inline, or as an attachment with email." Final Action, page 5. Accepting the Examiner's position for the sake of argument, the Applicant respectfully submits that it is not known to convert a format of text in a body of a message (entered in a text format into a message editor pane) to a picture format, and to send the message converted to the picture format as an inline image within the transmitted message. Moreover, the cited art references (taken alone or in combination) fail to provide such a disclosure.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3 and 19 are separately patentable over the cited art.

Dependent Claims 5 And 20 Are Separately Patentable

Dependent Claims 5 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meffert in view of Throop. Dependent Claims 5 and 20 are patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent Claims 1 and 11, and for the additional reasons discussed below. Dependent Claim 5, for example, depends from Claim 1, and thus includes all recitations discussed above with respect to Claim 1. In addition, Claim 5 recites that the text in the body of the message converted to the picture format is included as an attachment to the transmitted message.

In support of the rejection of Claims 5 and 20, the Final Action states that "the examiner takes official notice that it is well known in the art to attach images or files, inline, or as an attachment with email." Final Action, page 5. Accepting the Examiner's position for the sake of argument, the Applicant respectfully submits that it is not known to convert a format of text in a body of a message (entered in a text format into a message editor pane) to a picture format, and to include the converted text as an attachment to the transmitted message.

Attorney Docket No. 9400-433 (002512)
Application Serial No. 10/626,461
Filed: July 24, 2003
Page 9

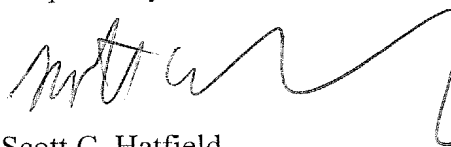
Moreover, the cited art references (taken alone or in combination) fail to provide such a disclosure. More generally, the art fails to teach or suggest text of a body of a message (entered into a message editor pane) that is included as an attachment to a transmitted message.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 5 and 20 are separately patentable over the cited art.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the Applicant submits that all pending claims in the present application are in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone should any additional issues need to be addressed.

Respectfully submitted,

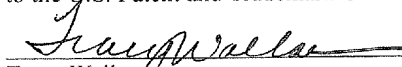


Scott C. Hatfield
Registration No.: 38,176

USPTO Customer No. 20792
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec
Post Office Box 37428
Raleigh, North Carolina 27627
Telephone: 919/854-1400
Facsimile: 919/854-1401

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the Office electronic filing system in accordance with § 1.6(a)(4) to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on January 5, 2009.


Tracy Wallace